

In the Claims

1 1. [Currently Amended] A method of forming a head assembly
2 comprising:
3 providing a base member;
4 forming a plurality of head components upon the base member
5 individually adapted to communicate information relative to media;
6 providing a plurality of component regions ~~adjacent~~ between respective
7 ones of the head components and a path of travel of the media; and
8 providing a support region intermediate adjacent ones of the head
9 components and positioned to support the media moving along the path of
10 travel, the support region comprising a material different than a material of the
11 component regions.

1 2. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 providing the support region comprises providing the support region comprising a
3 material having a hardness greater than a material of the component regions.

1 3. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 providing the support region comprises providing the support region comprising a
3 material having a greater resistance to wear than a material of the component
4 regions.

1 4. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 forming comprises forming the head components to individually comprise a read
3 element and a write element.

1 5. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 forming comprises forming the head components to communicate using Linear
3 Tape Open technology.

1 6. [Currently Amended] The method in accordance with claim 1
2 further comprising providing an insulating layer and wherein the providing the
3 ~~component regions~~ support regions comprises removing portions of the
4 insulating layer to form the ~~component regions~~ support regions.

1 7. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 providing the support region comprises forming the support region upon a cover
3 member and placing the cover member adjacent the base member.

1 8. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 7 wherein the
2 forming the support region upon the cover member comprises removing portions
3 of the cover member.

1 9. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 providing the support region comprises depositing support region material over
3 the base member.

1 10. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 providing the base member comprises providing a wafer substrate.

1 11. [Original] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 forming comprises forming head components individually configured to
3 communicate digital information relative to the media comprising a magnetic
4 tape.

1 12. [New] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 providing the component regions comprises providing the component regions
3 immediately adjacent to the media moving along the path of travel.

1 13. [New] The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the
2 providing the component regions comprises positioning the component regions
3 to contact the media moving along the path of travel.
4

5 14. [New] A method of forming a head assembly comprising:
6 providing a base member;
7 forming a plurality of head components upon the base member
8 individually adapted to communicate information relative to media;
9 providing a plurality of component regions adjacent respective ones of the
10 head components and a path of travel of the media;
11 providing a support region intermediate adjacent ones of the head
12 components and positioned to support the media moving along the path of
13 travel, the support region comprising a material different than a material of the
14 component regions; and
15 wherein the forming comprises forming the head components to
16 individually comprise a read element and a write element.

1 15. [New] A method of forming a head assembly comprising:
2 providing a base member;
3 forming a plurality of head components upon the base member
4 individually adapted to communicate information relative to media;
5 providing a plurality of component regions adjacent respective ones of the
6 head components and a path of travel of the media;
7 providing a support region intermediate adjacent ones of the head
8 components and positioned to support the media moving along the path of
9 travel, the support region comprising a material different than a material of the
10 component regions; and
11 providing an insulating layer, and wherein the providing the support region
12 comprises removing portions of the insulating layer to form the support region.